LUTON HOO,

THE SEAT OF THE EARL OF BUTE.

(From the GENERAL EVENING POST, Nov. 18, 1783.)

THOUGH this reſidence of Lord Bute is in a country far from eminently agreeable, and has not the leaſt pretenſion to much beauty of exterior; yet we know not many places, on any account, preferable to it, either for curioſity or uſe; where, either the artiſt for luxurious accommodation can more profitably ſpeculate, or where the traveller, after elegant amuſement, can more rationally admire.

The ground is tame indeed, but it has been adorned by Brown. The houſe, built at different dates, and by different men, is deformed with all the difference that can be in materials and arrangements; but the principal and finiſhing hand has been put to it by Adam.

He erected ſomething like an architectural facade on the principal maſs of the ſtructure, and at the gable end of it; and formed ſuch a ſuite of rooms, as in grandeur of dimenſions, and in luxury of decoration, are not often to be equalled.

The library, if inferior only to Blenheim, is the moſt magnificent receptacle for books which Europe can ſhew in the poſſeſſion of any private individual. It is a ſuite of three rooms, beautifully ſhaped, together making a length of 146 feet. The books, at once abundantly numerous, ſcarce, and rare, are well arranged; interſperſed with pictures that are fine, and different

philoſophical inſtruments that are ſplendid or original. There are beſides, cork models of the arch of Conſtantine, and various antique buildings, maps, &c. &c.

The ſaloon is ſuperb; it meaſures 60 feet by 36; and is as delightful as ſilk furniture, immenſe mirrors, and excellent pictures, can make it.

The pictures, both here and in the library, are many of them undoubted originals, and ſome of them by maſters who are in England not often met with: ſo that, added to *chef d'œuvres* of Guido, Caravaggio, the two Pouſſins, Caracci, Rubens, Cuyp, Swannivelt, Vandevelde, Claude, Baſſan, Titian, and Zuccarelli, you meet with wonderful performances by Velaſquez, Libari, Griffier, Tempeſta, Vecchio, and Buſiri.

The cielings are fabulous ſubjects, in ſmall compartments, by Biondi, Zucchi, and Hamilton, the ſucceſsful editor of Mrs. Siddons.

The candelabra in the ſaloon are Michael Angelo's, on the pedeſtals of Adam.

The reſt of the houſe is in the ſame great ſtyle; there is a large ſuite of apartments for viſitors, with two dreſſing-rooms to each bed-chamber, with ſervants' rooms communicating, &c. &c.

The paſſages are floored with ſtucco. Sea green is the prevailing colour of the furniture. The ſtoves throughout the houſe are of Brodie's manufacture. On the ſtair-caſe there is a piece of furniture, not ſo uſual as it ought to be, a wind-dial.

Of the objects that gain ſome value by adventitious circumſtances, are the following; a female head, painted by lady Wright; a carpet, worked by lady Mary Wortley Montagu; and two cabinets, given by her ladyſhip, which ſhe had received from the king of Sardinia.

There is alſo a barrel organ, on the largeſt ſcale perhaps ever made, performing 480 pieces of muſic; there being no leſs than

60 barrels belonging to the inſtrument, and on every barrel eight compoſitions fixed.

Of ground at Luton Hoo, there are, in all, about 1400 acres; of which, deducting 100 acres farm, 70 of ornamented ground, and four acres each for the botanical and kitchen garden, the remainder is in the park.

The ground, it has been ſaid, is not over-rich in character; the inequalities are not very ſtriking; it is, however, well planted, and made the moſt of by Brown.

The water is one of the beſt features in the place. It is the river Lea, which riſes four miles above Luton, and paſſes for more than two miles through lord Bute's grounds. In its courſe it forms into two caſcades, one of a ten feet fall, the other of thirty, and both perpendicular. The width and colour of the ſtream are both ſufficiently good for the purpoſes of landſcape decoration.

The botanical garden, in every part but in the moraſs and the aquatic plants, is very complete. The rock is excellent: the conſervatory is perhaps the moſt perfect in the kingdom; there are in it three diviſions of ſixty feet each, with breadth and width in proportion.

Excepting the king's reſidence at Kew, a botanical garden is an appendage peculiart o this place[1]; and his lordſhip, with a liberal zeal for ſcience, has given orders that it is to be open to all comers. And, for the ſtudent's aid, there is a catalogue of the plants, arranged according to the ſyſtem of Linnæus, with both the Latin and the common Engliſh names.

On this occaſion it would be an unjuſtifiable obſtruction of proper fame, were it not to be mentioned, that lord Bute's botanical ſkill was highly prized by Linnæus, and that this great philoſopher has, according to cuſtom, a new plant by the name of STUART.

[1] Some others might be added; particularly Dr. Pitcairne's at Iſlington, and the late Dr. Fothergill's at Upton now deſtroyed.

In ſhort, an air of letters, eaſe, and elegance, is prevalent throughout this place. Every thing, however coſtly, however rare, looks uſable and in uſe; the mind of the owner has informed the whole, and in it many excellent perfections are diſcovered, which, from unpretending outſide, from the want of buſtling into notoriety, the ſpectator was not led to expect.